



CITY COUNCIL

CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU
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HONOLULU, HAWAII

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TO: News Directors
FROM: Mike Gabbard 547-7001 or 371-5188

VOLUNTEER POLICING BILL MOVES FORWARD

HONOLULU--OCTOBER 15, 2003 -- COUNCILMEMBER MIKE GABBARD WANTS YOU! Gabbard's Bill 64 to establish a volunteer force of citizens to patrol their neighborhoods keeping an eye out for abandoned and derelict vehicles, and parking violations passed its second of three required readings by a unanimous vote at today's City Council meeting.

"The idea sprang from my work with Neighborhood Security Watch volunteers in my district including those who stood watch over the 'Bruddah Iz' sculpture and the Second City Citizens Patrol with whom I patrolled," Gabbard said. "The goal is to free up our overworked and understaffed police officers so that they can concentrate on busting drug dealers, rapists, and murderers. We have nearly 30,000 Neighborhood Security Watch volunteers on Oahu and I know many of them are eager to get more involved."

Na Lima Kokua o Honolulu (The Helping Hands of Honolulu) is an innovative program to train and deputize citizens to help the Honolulu Police Department issue warnings and citations for abandoned and derelict vehicles and parking violations. The City & County of Honolulu currently allows limited powers to volunteers to enforce handicapped parking laws. That program will become part of the volunteer policing program.

The program would be administered by the police department which would train volunteers in state and city laws, issuing citations, avoiding confrontations and testifying in court. Volunteers must be Honolulu residents who are U.S. citizens at least age 18, have a valid driver's license and pass a background check as well as the program's training course.

Cities including San Diego and San Antonio have well-established programs for allowing motivated residents to lend their time and talent to help their municipalities with minor enforcement issues and to make their communities safer. Honolulu's program will be patterned after these very successful programs.

The measure now heads to a November committee meeting and possible final passage in early December. Copies of Bill 64 are available at the City Clerk's office or by calling Gabbard's office at 547-7001.

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